



AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF THE PERFORMANCE OF PANCHAYATS IN TRIPURA: MAJOR INITIATIVES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

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ABSTRACT

The introduction of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment to the Constitution of India brought a new beginning and positive changes to Indian democracy. It has strengthened the concept of democracy by ensuring the decentralization of power at the grass roots level. The creation of the Three Tier Panchayat System was a land mark step giving voice to the rural people in the process of governance and democratic development planning. In conformity with this Act, in 1993, the Government of Tripura brought forward the Tripura Panchayats Act. The present paper aims to analyse the performance of the Panchayats of Tripura and the contribution of PRIs in developing the rural areas of Tripura.

KEYWORDS: Amendment, Decentralisation, Development Planning, Democracy, Rural Areas.

INTRODUCTION

The Panchayat Raj System was constitutionalised in India in 1993 through the 73rd Constitutional Amendment to the Constitution of India. This amendment act has strengthened the concept of democracy by ensuring the decentralization of power at the grass roots level throughout the country. In conformity with this Act, in 1993, the Government of Tripura brought forward the Tripura Panchayats Act. The creation of the Three Tier Panchayat System was a land mark step giving voice to the rural people in the process of governance and democratic development planning. The Act provided an avenue for the unprivileged and empowered the rural people as a whole to enter the political actors, in many cases for the first time. The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act provided for devolution of funds, functions and functionaries to the Panchayat Raj Institutions to make them financially capable and effective.

The objective of this research paper is to analyse the performance of the Panchayats of Tripura during 2021-2022 financial year. The paper also attempts to examine various initiatives taken by the government and different achievements of the panchayats of Tripura during 2021-22. For this research, data is mainly collected from secondary sources such as books, journals, government reports etc.

Performance of Panchayats in Tripura:

Tripura played a significant role in implementing Panchayati Raj System in India. Eventhough Tripura attained the Statehood in the year 1972, the journey towards the Panchayat system started before the attainment of Statehood of Tripura.

The table 1 shows the number of elected member of panchayats of Tripura

1. Number of Panchayats	District Level	Intermediate Level	Village Level
	08	35	589

2. Number of Elected Representatives	Total	Women	Women (%)
	6620	2993	45.21

Source: Reports of Panchayat Department, Government of Tripura

Table 1: Number of Elected Member of Panchayats of Tripura

The Panchayats in Tripura have contributed in developing the rural Tripura in a significant way. Various achievements of the Panchayat Department of Tripura during 2021-22 are as follows:

1. Introduction of New Schemes:

During the period of study the Panchayat department of Government of Tripura have taken different initiatives and achieved significant success in implementing various schemes under the department. The major schemes and achievements, as per government record, are as follows:

- i. **Chief Minister's Swanirbhar Parivar Yojana (CMSPY):** Encouraging rural people for taking up backyard activities to ensure self nutritional needs and for holistic development of the State is the main objective of this scheme. During the year 2021-22 following targets has been achieved under CMSPY:

Sl. No.	Scheme/ Department	Target	Achieved
1	ARDD	30,060 families/ year	21,538
2	Fishery	50,000 families/ year	60,000
3	Agri/Horti	2 lakhs families/ year	1,87,763
4	Forest	2 Lakhs families/year	2, 00,000

Source: Economic Review of Tripura (2021-22), Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Government of Tripura

Table 2: Achievement under CMSPY Scheme

Table 2 shows that most of the targets by different departments to implement CMSPY scheme were achieved. Achievement under ARDD was less than the target and also in case of Agri/Horti department target was not met. But a significant amount of target was achieved. It is clear that Fishery and Forest department achieved the target under CMSPY scheme in rural Tripura.

ii. Chief Minister Model Village Scheme (CMMVS):

The objective of this scheme is to develop a Model GP/VC by each respected MLAs of rural area in convergence with implementation of different schemes of central and state so that other Gram Panchayat/Village Council may replicate the same to develop them as model Gram Panchayat / Village Council. The scheme has been implemented from the financial year 2021-22 under which 55 GPs / VCs has been selected by the Hon'ble MLAs of Rural areas with an aim to develop those GPs / VCs as a Model Village within three years so that others may replicate the same. An amount of Rs. 4,99,89,090.00 has been spent under this scheme during the study period.

iii. Mukhyamantri Swanirbhar Yojna (Rural): The aim of the MSY Scheme is to facilitate the rural shopkeepers by providing trade license to avail insurance coverage and benefits of financial assistance under Central and State Government Scheme. The Panchayat department performed well in this regard and a total of 7332 shopkeepers have been brought under the purview of insurance coverage for which an amount of Rs. 71,88,017/- have been involved during 2021-22.

2. Adoption of Online/e-digital Activities:

The audit online application was launched to facilitate audit of accounts of all tiers of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in a uniform and timely manner to bring in transparency and accountability in their mandated activities utilizing Finance Commission Grants. In Tripura, during 2021-22, 1176 Gram Panchayats/Village Committees got fund under XV Finance Commission and as per above norms 529 GPs/VCs as 45% of XV FC has been completed through Audit Online application.

3. Financial Status of Schemes Implemented: The schemes implemented as follows:

i. Panchayat Development Fund (PDF): An amount of Rs.55.998Cr. has been transferred to the Rural Local Bodies for (RLBs) for implementation of development activities including administrative expenses.

ii. Fifteenth Finance Commission Grants (XV FC): An amount of Rs.141.00 Crore for the year 2021-22 as received from the Ministry of Finance, GoI which has been transferred to all the Rural Local Bodies (RLBs) including TTAADC, HQ for implementation

of development activities. The expenditure are being tracked through PFMS.

iii. Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA): As per the data published by the department of Statistics, Government of Tripura, an amount of Rs.5.18 Crore has been received during the year 2021-22 from the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Govt. Of India, for taking up of different activities as approved plan. The amount received for conducting different training to elected representatives & functionaries, Construction of Panchayats Bhawans, procurement of desktop computers etc.

4. Panchayat Award:

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India awarded the following local bodies in different categories for their outstanding performance on the eve of celebration of National Panchayati Raj day during the year 2021-22 (Appraisal Year -2020-21)

Sl. No.	Name of Award	Year	Name of the Rural Local Body
1	Deen Dayal Upadhyay Panchayat Sashaktikaran Puraskar (DDUPSP)	2021 - 2022	Paschim Tripura Zilla Parishad
2			Dukli Panchayat Samiti
3			Charilam Panchayat Samiti
4			West Ichailcherra GP, Kalacherra RD Block
5			Bilthai GP, Panisagar RD Block
6	Nanaji Deshmukh Rastriya Gourav Gram Sabha Puraskar (NDRG)		Kadamtala GP, Kadamtala RD Block
7	GPDP Award		Ishanchandra Nagar GP, Dukli RD Block
8	Child Friendly Gram Panchayat		Mohinipur GP, Mohanpur RD Block
9	e-Panchayat Puruskar		Best Performing of the State 1st Prize under category- II

Source: Economic Review of Tripura (2021-22), Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Government of Tripura

FINDINGS

From the above it has been found that the Panchayat Department of Government of Tripura have made significant contribution in the development of the rural areas of the state and accordingly different local bodies got award from the Union Government. The Panchayat department of the state made significant achievement in introducing and implementing the Chief Minister's Swanirbhar Parivar Yojana, Chief Minister Model Village Scheme, Mukhyamantri Swanirbhar Yojna (Rural), Adoption of Online/e-digital Activities, Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan, utilisation of PDF and Finance Commission Fund and other related schemes.

CONCLUSION

In the end it can be mentioned that Panchayats in Tripura has

made significant contribution in developing the rural areas of the state and implemented various schemes with good success rate. From the facts that have been discussed above it is quite clear that devolution of power at the grass root level is done by the government in the State of Tripura. But there are also areas where the panchayats needs to work more efficiently to get the rural areas of the state more developed. For the effective performance of the functions assigned to the Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs) adequate resources should be provided/ created so that they can meet the local needs and able to improve economic condition of the rural areas of the state. For the effective functioning and enhancement of the rural areas of Tripura, PRIs need to be more empowered by increasing their ability to raise resources at all the three levels (Village, Block and District). Initiatives should be taken to increase the own sources of income of the PRIs.

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